

----- ST REPORT INTERNATIONAL ONLINE MAGAZINE -----
"The Original 16/32bit Online Magazine"
from
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"

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> 05/17/91: STReport #7.20 The Original 16/32 bit Online Magazine!

- The Editor's Desk - CPU REPORT - MAC REPORT
- Start a Usergroup - GEM-View! Review - ICD SOFTWARE
- SYSTEM 7.0 RELEASED - Apple Stock Drops - CHANGING TIMES!

-* MEGA STE NOW CLASS B OK! *-
-* START MAGAZINE SUSPENDS OPERATIONS *-
-* ST WRITER ELITE 4.0 RELEASED! *-

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> The Editor's Podium

This issue is chock full of valuable information, it seems the Atari marketplace is 'hunting' for its own place in the natural order of things. Three weeks ago STReport pointed out the severity of Antic Publishing and Start magazines's position. At this point in time, they (Antic) are negotiating the sale of the magazine. According to our sources, contract negotiations are fully underway... Of course, the results will not be known until all negotiations are satisfactorily completed.

Lately one can find a rather sensible clamoring for Atari to "get with it" and produce real Hard disk software or, license the outstanding software ICD produces. Not a bad idea. But if one were to pay any attention at all to one Atari online rep, (a newfie), to ask for such a thing appears to be a blow to Atari's heart. But then, another of Atari's onliners requested that suggestions be forwarded to the proper parties as this newfie has no responsibilities in that area. Someone ought to let this newfie know that the "Answer Man" show was cancelled decades ago. In any case, the adoption of ICD's hard drive software is in our opinion an excellent idea. And it would come at a time when Atari can use the excellent PR such a move will generate.

Saving the best for last, according to our sources, the Atari Mega Ste is now Class B certified! The TT030 is next. In fact, if you listen carefully, you can almost hear the echos of the cheers when the folks in Sunnyvale were informed of the good news. Now, the trick is to get them into the consumer pipeline. Also, it would appear there is some serious grumbling concerning the ease of upgrading the MSTe1 to a unit with an internal hard drive. Reports are trickling in that installation of a hard drive is made rather difficult by the inclusion of a "molded plastic webbing", honey combed affair inside the hard drive enclosure. As always, lets wait and see. STReport is aware of an upgrade 'kit' of sorts and that Atari would rather have their dealers or, at least have technically qualified individuals do the installation. As soon as we have more info concerning this matter it will be made available. In the meantime, the 'stripped down' version of the MSTe is not available in the States.. yet. Therefore, it does not effect us at all. The MegaSTE4/50 is very good buy and a substantially improved unit. If you are in the market, don't hesitate get one. You'll love it.

Thanks once again for your strong support!

Ralph.....

TODAY'S NEWS ..TODAY!

> STReport's Staff
=====

The regulars and this week's contributors!

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via E-Mail to:

Compuserve..... 70007,4454
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WHAT'S NEW IN THE ATARI FORUMS (May 17)

ST WRITER ELITE 4.0!

Bruce Noonan has uploaded version 4.0 of ST Writer Elite! The following
files are now available in LIBRARY 1 ("New Uploads") of the Atari Produc-

tivity Forum (GO ATARIPRO):

STWEL4.ARC - ST Writer Elite 4.0 Word Processor
STWELD.ARC - Documentation for ST Writer Elite 4.0
STWGER.ARC - German and Spanish ST Writer Elite 4.0 Word Processor

PROGRAM OF THE WEEK FROM DOUBLE CLICK

DCRTCL.ARC, available in LIBRARY 13 of the Atari Vendors Forum (GO ATARI-
VEN). DC Right Call v1.0 gives you access to the file selector (including
alternate ones like UIS) or Maxifile(tm) with the press of the right mouse
button.

NEW FROM GRIBNIF IN ATARIVEN

The following new files are available in LIBRARY 8 of the Atari Vendors
Forum (GO ATARIVEN) from Gribnif Software:

FIXQUE.ARC -- A fixed NeoDesk 3.02 Printer Queue. The one included in the
PCH302.ARC would not print correctly, so download this file if you down-
loaded the older version of the PATCH program and you use the NeoDesk
Printer Queue.

FIXPCH.ARC -- This patch program will upgrade copies of NeoDesk 3 (ver-
sion 3.01) to the newer 3.02 version. This program fixes several small
bugs and problems, and adds some minor enhancements.

NEW IN ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM

The following new files are available in LIBRARY 1 of the Atari Portfolio
Forum (GO APORTFOLIO) courtesy of BJ Gleason:

STOPW.ZIP - A multidisplay stopwatch/event counter.
Up to 10 timers/event.

CLOCK.EXE - Turn your Portfolio into a BIG clock!

BM2.ZIP - Battery Monitor Version 2; smaller than the old version.

ADDRES.EXE - Address Viewer for the PC, Version 1.0

BATTST.ZIP - Battery Test for the Portfolio, version 1

THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM ON COMPUSERVE
HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AN
OFFICIAL SUPPORT SITE BY ATARI CORPORATION

"GO APORTFOLIO TO ACCESS THE ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM"

> CPU STATUS REPORT
=====

LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Compiled by: Lloyd E. Pulley, Sr.

- Topeka, Kansas

STAND-ALONE VIDEO TOASTER

NewTek, whose Video Toaster board for the Amiga acts as a stillstore, switcher, titler, and video effects generator, among other things, has announced that because of the fading Commodore Amiga market, it is now selling a stand-alone Toaster system for \$3,995.

The new stand-alone Toaster looks like a Commodore Amiga 2000, but it is designed specifically for the broadcast TV market. The product features a four-input production switcher which can perform cuts, fades and wipes among any of seven sources including four video inputs. It also includes a digital video effects generator, a three-dimensional animation package called LightWave, a character generator, a paint program, 2 frame buffers, a color processing engine called ChromaFX, and a frame grabber and storer.

- Sunnyvale, California

NEW CHIP SPEEDS UP WINDOWS

The first user interface single chip controller microprocessor, the W5086, has been introduced by Weitek. The W5086 incorporates in hardware the key functions of Microsoft Window's graphic device interface and is expected to increase the speed of the Windows environment and Windows applications.

The new chip is expected to provide an increase of 25 times the current speed of BitBlk transfers, which consist of moving the visual objects in Windows and is expected to cut the average user's work-time in Windows in half.

Weitek claims the W5086 is compatible with 80286 and 80386 hardware and IBM Video Graphics Array (VGA) arrays, so it will run all existing non-Windows software. Weitek expects the new chip to be available by this fall through original equipment manufacturer video cards and be in the \$150-\$200 price range.

- Phoenix, Arizona

GUILTY PLEA IN 'SUNDEVIL' CASE

Sentencing is due on June 7 for Baron Majette, 19, also known as "Doc Savage" who was arrested in late March as a result on the on-going joint federal/state "Operation Sundevil" investigation. Majette plead guilty in the Superior Court in the State of Arizona to a single count of computer fraud, a third degree misdemeanor. Under Arizona state law, the maximum sentence for this crime is 10 years and the 'presumptive sentence' is 5 years.

- Manhasset, New York

MAC VARS JUMPING TO WINDOWS?

According to a report in this week's Computer Reseller News by Allison Calderbank, several Macintosh VARs (value-added resellers), are drifting toward Windows 3.0 applications because the MS-DOS GUI (graphical user interface) offers better market opportunities.

Some industry observers feel that this could pose a very significant problem for Apple, which has always relied on its position as having the only strongly GUI-oriented operating environment to maintain customer loyalty.

- Central, Hong Kong

HONG KONG TO LEGALIZE SOME SOFTWARE COPYING

The Law Reform Commission's Copyright Subcommittee in Hong Kong has proposed that copying of software products by end users should not be a criminal offence. Although heavy penalties would still apply to commercial copying and distribution of copyright material, the Business Software Alliance (BSA) and Software Publishers Association (SPA) face a serious legal setback to their software protection efforts.

In the past, Hong Kong has had a flourishing software piracy trade, catering principally to students and non-business users. There have been many criticisms in the past of prices being much higher than in the USA, and of a lack of user support.

- San Diego, California

HEWLETT-PACKARD HELPING OUT AMERICA'S CUP YACHT RACERS

In the fast-changing world of yacht racing, computer technology is essential in designing new boats and Hewlett-Packard is helping out the American team headed by Dennis Conner.

Yacht building is as much an art as a science, but, while the three years prior to the 1987 America's Cup races saw Dennis Conner's Stars & Stripes team tank-testing models of 40 designs and building three full-sized yachts, the greater use of computers has allowed them to tank-test fewer than 15 models this time and build only one full-sized yacht.

Hewlett-Packard computer systems are also used by the New Zealand challengers, and both teams use HP computers for both on-board tactical evaluation, design, and simulation.

Besides working with yacht designers and the racing teams, HP is also providing about 150 personal computers and workstations, along with associated printers and plotters, for use during this week's World Championship races.

- Cupertino, California

SUIT FILED AGAINST APPLE

Due to Apple Computer's disappointing third quarter financial results, a lawsuit (Berley v. Sculley) was filed on May 7, 1991, against the company and certain officers and directors for allegedly making misleading statements regarding the company's prospective earnings and business outlook. The lawsuit alleges violation of federal securities laws.

- Scotts Valley, California

BORLAND STOCK FALLS

Since Charlotte Walker, analyst for Labe Simpson and Co., issued a report in which she said Borland would lose a copyright infringement case with Lotus, Borland stock has dropped 2-3/4 to 48. Lotus has sought a summary judgement against Borland claiming Borland's Quattro Pro product violates the copyright on Lotus' 1-2-3 spreadsheet product.

David Bayer, an analyst with Montgomery Securities, said the outcome of the case was far from clear and believed the market was overreacting. "I think it (the stock fall) is overstating the case.

- Cupertino, California

SYSTEM 7.0 NOW SHIPPING FOR MAC

System 7.0, an upgrade to the Macintosh operating system is now shipping according to a recent announcement by Apple Computer. Apple calls System 7.0 "the most significant enhancement to Macintosh since its introduction in 1982". According to John Sculley, Apple's chairman and chief executive officer, "System 7 sets a new standard, thereby widening the gap between what one can do with a computer, and what one can do with a Macintosh."

Among the features contained in the new operating system are:

Improved handling of fonts and desk accessories

'Virtual memory' which allows the automatic expansion of memory available for applications

'InterApplication Communications' (IAC) which allows disparate programs to dynamically work together

'Data Access Manager' (DAT) which allows access to mainframe and minicomputer-based SQL (structured query language) databases.

System 7.0 will be bundled with all Macintoshes within the next few months, and those which contain System 6 software will include a special card for a free software upgrade.

Those buying the PUK -- Personal Upgrade Kit -- get 90 days of direct, toll-free telephone support, and those buying the GUK -- Group Upgrade Kit -- get 180 days of free technical support. This is the first time Apple has had a direct support hotline for its products, and is not depending on dealers to answer buyer's questions.

Apple stated that it "expects most of the more than 4,000 Macintosh

applications currently shipping to be compatible with the new System 7."

- San Jose, California

MEMORY REQUIREMENTS OF SYSTEM 7.0

A minimum of 2 megabytes of RAM are needed to run applications under System 7, but Apple officials say most computers now are being shipped with 2 megabytes of RAM, even the Macintosh Classics. Of the 3 1/2 million Macintoshes in the US, 2 million of them have the necessary RAM on hand to run System 7.0 software, said Apple USA President Bob Puette.

Even the 1 meg Macintosh Classics, which have become Apple's volume product, will come with System 7 software but won't be able to run it without a RAM upgrade. Dealers will be responsible to inform buyers that their machines will not be able to run System 7.0 software, and will have the incentive to sell buyers of the lowest-priced Macs more memory at the time of purchase.

- San Jose, California

APPLE REDUCES MEMORY PRICES

Coinciding with the extra memory requirements of the recently released System 7.0 operating system, Apple has announced a significant price cuts of up to 41% for logic board upgrades and up to 57% for memory kits. 2MB of RAM is required to run System 7.0.

- San Jose, California

BILL GATES HELPS INTRODUCE SYSTEM 7

Bill Gates, Microsoft chairman and co-founder, introduced new Microsoft Excel features and a new version of the venerable Flight Simulator. Despite their friction in court, where Apple is suing Microsoft over its Windows product in a celebrated 'look and feel' case, the two firms continue to work closely on product development and collaborated closely on development of the TrueType technology.

Gates told the audience that he was wearing the same blue polo shirt Steve Jobs, Apple co-founder, gave him in 1984 at the introduction of the original Macintosh. Gates got a laugh when he said, "At that time there were 15 developers and we all went out to dinner afterwards." At this roll-out there were 2,000 developers. He concluded his address by saying that Microsoft will have 8 major applications which take advantage of System 7.

- San Jose, California

MOST EXISTING MAC APPS WILL RUN ON SYSTEM 7.0

Most of the existing 4,000 applications will run on the new System 7.0 software, according to the company. Apple engineers say they tested 777 existing Macintosh programs and the 'top 500' ran on System 7.0 with no problems.

- San Jose, California

100 NEW 3RD PARTY SYSTEM 7.0 APPS
DUE BY AUGUST

In addition to the existing 4,000 applications on the market for the Macintosh, John Sculley, Apple CEO, promised over 100 new applications written specifically to exploit the power of the new software would ship by August.

- San Jose, California

APPLE SYSTEM 7.0 EXPLOITS WORKGROUP
COMPUTING

Apple has leaped ahead of IBM in the area of distributed processing -- not with a different class of computers, but with a different class of computer usage, so says Bob Puette, president of Apple USA.

The new System 7.0 software enables the processing of an application to be offloaded to a different Macintosh while the user's machine processes a different program, a feature normally found in far more sophisticated networks and a feature designed to make it more attractive to corporate users. Apple demonstrated this capacity on an LC which distributed an application to a second Macintosh while it worked on a different one.

"Workgroup computing," with System 7.0, proclaimed Puette, now goes "beyond connecting computers to a single printer." Workgroup computing is also at the heart of several new products and features for the Mac. The "publish" and "subscribe" options now found in several applications, written specifically with System 7.0 in mind, enable users to make their files available to others on their network without departing their application, or pulling up a special network menu.

- Santa Clara, California

CLARIS ANNOUNCES SYSTEM 7.0 PRODUCTS

Claris Corporation has announced the introduction of a series of new and revised products designed specifically to utilize the features of Macintosh System 7.0 operating system which began shipping on May 13.

The new products are a spreadsheet (Claris Resolve) which Claris calls "the first Macintosh application designed from the ground up for System 7.0" and a word processor (MacWrite Pro), while those programs modified for the new System 7.0 operating system are MacProject II version 2.5 and HyperCard 2.1.

- San Jose, California

VENTURA PUBLISHER FOR SYSTEM 7.0

Ventura Software has announced a new version of Ventura Publisher, Macintosh Edition desktop publishing software that includes support for the System 7.0 architecture.

System 7.0 features supported by the new version of Ventura include: Publish and Subscribe, which is the ability of one document to have

dynamic links with another document; Interapplication Communication, or the communication between applications; and Balloon help, a form of system level help within and between applications.

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> ATARI BOSTON STR Feature A view of Atari life from Boston
=====

A BOSTONIAN AND HIS ATARI
=====

by Norman Boucher

Hello my name is Norman, and I will try and give you an idea on what it is like being an Atari user in the Boston area. First a little about myself and how I got started on Atari. I had always liked video games, so when I was in a local salvage store and spotted an 800XL for \$25.00 I knew that I had to have it. About a year later I moved up to a 130XE and telecommunications. This was a whole new world for me. I learned of a usergroup within a 30 minute drive so I joined. It was here that I saw my first ST, also I met the owner of a computer store that sold Atari Computers. Well it did not take long for him to get me into an ST.

I now own a 1040STfm, both Color and Mono monitors, a 40 meg hard drive, a second floppy, and two 9 pin printers. of course hundreds of disks with all sorts of PD stuff from the boards. I still like games but find most of my time is taken up calling the boards. The only national board I call is Delphi (NORMAN238). At the time I got my first ST I found out about another usergroup closer to home. This group, South Shore Atari Group (SSAG) was just what I needed. Before long I joined the Steering Committee and am now assistant director. SSAG maintains a sig on Delphi in the Boston node. Since the 20/20 plan things have been slow in the Boston area but we still intend to keep the area going, so next time on Delphi go to Boston and say hello. Well enough about me.

Last year, the Boston Computer Society's Atari groups along with help and support of some of the other groups in the area hosted the New England AtariFest '90. At this point I would like to say thanks to Kevin and Harry for without their energy and determination we would never have gotten the show off the ground. Thanks Guys!! I would like also to thank all the vendors who helped make the show the success that it was, and if you would like to see another one let us know. It helped having some great Atari developers living and working in the area, and when these people decided to come it made it that more easier to bring the others on board. It was

three LONG years between shows and I would not want to see it go that long again.

A little about Boston. We seem to be blessed with not one but three stores that carry Atari products. That seems above average compared to the rest of the country. There is a forth store 2.5 hours away from Boston that also carries our beloved machine. But for some reason all the Atari users seem to be hiding. I mean with this much in the way of dealer support you would think that every where you go there would be an Atari user. I know there are a lot of usergroups around but there is also a l-arge group of people who belong to more that one of these groups so it is hard to tell exactly what the market is like. Boston is also home of the Berkeley School of Music and I have met a few Atari users but for some reason they don't want to mix with the rest of us. I would love some-musicians to belong to some of the groups, I think all of us would benefit from meeting and talking with these people. Of course Boston has the Bos-ton Computer Museum which was just written up in Current Notes. I am sad to say that living here I never been there and sorry to say it had to take a visitor to our city to spotlight it. Boston is also home to the Boston Computer Society the largest computer usergroup in the world. BCS supp-orts all types of computers and is known worldwide. It is my hope to tell you about the other groups in and around Boston in future stories.

We in the Boston area seem to have it good, I mean not only three dea-lers we also have some fine developers around. Jim Alan who shows up at our meetings when time permits to the fine folks from Gribnif half a state away. Those two are not the only well known Atari people around there is Albert Braggata I am sure that You have seen his fine shareware programs and picture files on the boards. There is also Rick Keene recently feat-ured in ST Informer, and Dr. T's, the Guys who bring FoReM BBS and many many more. The only support we can't seem to get out here is from ATARI itself. There are places that say what can we have and Atari jumps to help and places like Boston for some reason getting any kind of acknowl-dgment from them is like having all your teeth pulled.

Well in leaving I must say Boston is a great city!!! If you get the chance come on by and visit us. I will be writing some more (I Hope) in the future. Sometimes I go off the deep end, I get ticked off what can I say I just don't know enough to keep my big mouth shut or in this case keep my fingers off the keyboard. Remember if you want to yell at me for my horrid style of writing or just want to say hello I am always on Delphi (at least once a day) if you have any ideas on what you would want me to write about again let me know. If you don't have a Delphi account you can send me US Mail thru my group SSAG P.O. Box 129 Hyde Park, Ma 02136. I might yell I might scream and I may throw a cream pie at some people but I very seldom bite anyone.

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About the Gravis Joysticks from Ron Haidenger (Product Manager) on CIS...

Advanced Gravis makes 2 models of sticks for the Atari. One is a Switch (digital) Joystick and the other is our Amiga/Atari ST MouseStick.

The Switch Joystick was upgraded last year to include Turbo-fire and adjustable switch points. When you tighten up the handle tension, the switch contact locations actually respond to less stick handle movement. There should not be many of the older non-turbo units left out in the market...

The MouseStick is an optical joystick which can function as a Switch Joystick or a mouse. It can be defined by the user for movement control and button functions. As with all our joysticks, the MouseStick has 3 fire buttons, a full-sized foam padded handle, adjustable handle tension and microswitch buttons. The microswitch buttons are rated for a MINIMUM life of 10,000,000 operations...The MouseStick has added button power as they can be programmed to perform several different functions such as Trim, Double Click, Click & Lock, Adjustable Turbo Fire and more.

Some paraphrased comments by various Atari on-line representatives. Maybe there's a tidbit here that might interest or help you. From the ST RT on Genie...

...recently we [Atari] have seen networking packages for the TT030, MegaSTe and the ST's. Of course, all of them are currently beta versions (the ST version requires a special cartridge) and aren't complete yet, but the Atari users could be seeing some decent networking software real soon.

...all I can say at this time is that we [Atari] are looking into Multitasking for GEM.

...to make sure applications will work okay on future ST and TT systems, with few or no modifications, programmers should use the VDI for their output and stay independent of hardware.

...due to a limitation of the Spectre GCR and not the TT, the TT won't be able to run Mac II software at this time.

...roms in the ST, STe and TT's are currently socketed.

...Atari is selling a system in Saudi Arabia that has TOS 1.2 done in Arabic. It has an Arabic keyboard, character set and when you enter text, it goes from right to left.

...programs that do their own Atari Laser Printer Output will probably be unable to use or run in TT Ram.

...some early developer versions of the TT030 had the 68881 floating

point coprocessors, the current systems are being shipped with the 68882.

...The STe and the TT030 have 3 channels for the GI sound chip and 2 DMA channels for stereo sound.

...to get a TT030 ram upgrade, you should contact the dealer where you purchased your system. They are in short supply but available.

...while getting the TT030 certified as a Class B system has taken Atari longer than they anticipated, they are not holding up its certification on purpose. As soon as it passes its FCC tests, it will be certified.

...changing desktop resolutions on the MegaSTe and TT030 is as simple as pressing a key. ALT 1-3 handles the three ST resolutions and ALT 4-5 handles the TT Low and Medium resolution (on the TT only).

...on the TT030, if you have problems running a program, try running it in ST Medium or High resolution and in ST Ram.

...if you own a PTC1426 monitor, it has a small black switch on the back that is labeled "VGA/TTC". This affects the horizontal timing and screen width.

...most Atari PC's, the MegaSTe and the TT use a 6v lithium battery pack for their real time clock. Since they are common in the PC world, you might check with a PC service shop for one if your dealer doesn't have one in stock.

...while in theory all new AA alkaline batteries are the same, in the 'real world', many things can effect their life span. How long they set on the shelf, the tolerance of the length of the battery and slightly different positive end buttons can all effect the life of a battery cell.

...Lattice C/TT is basically an upgrade to Lattice C v5 that has been recompiled improve performance by using the 68030 code itself (the same with Devpac TT). Lattice C v5 and the regular Devpac will work on a 68000 system, Lattice C/TT and Devpac TT will only work on the 68030 processor.

...Atari's SPF004 6881 board for the old Mega ST is implemented identically to the MegaSTe's FPU, software that worked on the FPU in the old Mega's will work with the MegaSTe.

...Currently, Atari's plans are to charge about \$100 for the FSMGDOS up-grade. The package would include FSMGDOS, FSM.CPX and the entire Lucida font family. But these plans and charges could change by the time of its release.

...if you want the full VME Catalog, contact VITA, VMEbus International Trade Association, 10229 N. Scottsdale Rd, Suite E, Scottsdale, Arizona 85253. They produce a directory of VME Compatible Products, and a VMEbus Handbook that gives a full tutorial on the VME specification.

on Genie...

...The NEC 3D is a good monitor but quite expensive...WuzTEK in California (I work for WuzTEK) sells a plug 'm play multi-sync monitor that retails for \$549 complete with all cables. If you are interested you may reach me by phone at 714-753-9253.

...[if a VGA monitor does not work with Omniswitch], there may be a chance that [it] will not work with the Atari ST at all.

...The reason...is because VGA runs a 31 Khz horz. and optionally at 35kHz and the Atari ST displays 15.7Kz in color mode and 35.1Khz in mono. That is why some VGA monitors will display ST's mono pictures. Unfortunately, some VGA monitors does not support the higher 35Khz frequency and therefore will not work with the ST. Beware! Know the scanning frequency range of the monitor before you buy them!

Question from Stephen Holcombe on CIS...

I'm looking for a good C compiler for my ST, preferably as UNIX-like as possible.

Answer from Bob Retelle (Sysop) on CIS...

...the Mark Williams C package uses a shell that is very UNIX like in its commands. It also includes an emacs-like editor...

Answer from Greg Wageman on CIS...

...I've been working with Mark Williams C for several years now. It is a very solid compiler, with lots of familiar Unix emulation functions, a source debugger, and a resource construction set. The shell is also very familiar to a Unix user, providing the most frequently used commands...

Comments from Mark Kelling on CIS...

...I've seen the ATARI MEGA machines featured in several FOX network shows over the past few months. First was on an episode of "Harry and the Hendersons" where one character was using a MEGA 4 with ATARI hard drive to type a newspaper (I think) article. Another time was in a show called "Parker Lewis Can't Lose" There the MEGA was just shown (for several seconds) sitting on a desk. It wasn't actually used.

From Doug Wheeler (ICD) on how to install the new upgrades of the ICD software. From the ST RT on Genie...

Doug's Easy ICDBOOT Installation Instructions

1. After unARcing all the files, copy them onto a floppy disk organized just like an original ICD disk (ICDBOOT.PRG in an AUTO folder, and most everything else outside the AUTO folder).
2. Reboot your ST and bypass the HD autobooting using CTRL-ALT-LSHFT (remember, if you're using TOS 1.2 or later, wait until the floppy light comes on before pressing CTRL-ALT-LSHFT).
- 2a. Occasionally, the programs in the AUTO folder on floppy disk will not run after a warm boot. If ICDBOOT.PRG didn't run, run it manually from the floppy disk.
3. Run HDUTIL.PRG and use the BOOT option to install the booter onto your boot partition (usually C:). You can also use the CONFIG option to reconfigure the booter the way you want.

4. That's it...reboot and your HD should autoboot with the new booter.

From Frank Bell from the ST RoundTable on Genie...

...I had a look at MULTIGEM the other day and can say the following:

1. Software multi-tasking system, really! If a program is written for multi-tasking, such as the included Clock program, it really runs while your executing a program in another window. Otherwise you just have up to 6 programs loaded at the same time and must jump from window to window to do your thing. The program is similar to Multifinder on the Mac...

2. Up to 6 programs can be active at one time if no accessories are active. MULTIGEM uses free accessory slots for control. Once a program has ended, the slot becomes available for the next job.

3. It should work on all STs and TTs. Great big monitors too.

4. I understand quite a few normal ST/TT programs work right out of the box. I didn't have too much time to play with the program and never did read the manual but I had Turbo C, WordPlus, my terminal program shell and editor running along with the above Clock.Prg and two or three normal GEM windows open. I could either just click on the window/program I wanted or click on one the accessory slots to active the program. The Clock just ticked away all by itself in the corner (most of the time, sometimes it wouldn't tick for a minute or so). Programs that use the menu line cause no problems, the program thats active owns it. Activate another program and it takes the menu line.

5. Programs such as GEMIMI won't work. I suppose the same goes for every Desktop program or program that takes over the complete desktop from GEM...Genie's Aladdin (ST version) would load part way but I could never activate it.

If you have one of those big monitors or a multisync and a overscan program, I used MegaScreen for 768x608 pixels, MULTIGEM is what we've all be waiting for. But is also works on a normal ST or STE but the screen is a little cramped. MULTIGEM also needs one of those VDI accelerators. A T16, T20, T30, T40, ..., or SST must scream.

I think multitasking is just about here.

Oh, the price. I think its around \$80.00, but as it hasn't come to Austria yet the price is still open. The version I saw came directly from the CeBit and was in the version 1.0. Update to the next version is free.

From Keith Brooks (New Horizon Computer Systems) from the ST RT on Genie...

I just demo'd a MegaSTe4 and TT030 at a large company in Calgary that has offices from coast to coast and several in U.S. The program demo'd was written in dbMan v5.1, the command files and DBF's came to over 500k. (Their entire criteria is raw speed for this program.)

The top speed for their '386 machines running the uncompiled version

was 80 seconds. Their newest unit, an Everex 286/20mhz with Step-Cache, ran the program in 67 seconds. Our clients MegaST4 (w/TOS 1.2) got 107 seconds.

We took in the MegaSTe4 and our TT030/8Mb unit. The MegaSTe4 (with 16mhz cache turned on) run the program in 70 seconds, just 3 seconds off the mark set by their Everex but 10 seconds faster than their fastest '386. The TT030 (reminiscent of burning rubber and squealing tires) ran the same program in 38 seconds!!! It ran the compiled version in 24 seconds. The company couldn't believe it, so we ran the tests 3 more times...all with the same results.

The subject of a hot rod computer in their boardroom brought some higher ups down the hall. Serious stuff. Their EDP and accounting and test departments will be hearing about it...

Question from Myles Cohen on CIS...

I just bought a STE. Included was a disk with an AUTO folder with STE_FIX.PRG in it. I had heard that POOLFIX4.PRG was a good idea to use with the STE, so I included both of these programs in my hard drive AUTO folder...Now when my Hard disk initializes...I get a message that says one of the programs in my AUTO folder does not follow the XBRA conventions...Turns out that the culprit is POOLFIX. Can anyone help me?

Answer from Dan Rhea (Sysop) on CIS...

...I suspect your problem may relate to the order the files are [physically] in the AUTO folder. Not the way you see them sorted, but in the order they are on the disk.

Copy the files to another folder (use another window) then delete both files out of the AUTO folder (if you have more files in the auto folder, copy and delete them too). Now, one at a time, move the files back into the AUTO folder (put poolfix in first, then the other fix file). Move the rest of the files back in the order suggested (if any). Now reboot the system and see if your problem is still there. If so you have that second folder to juggle things again. This "might" fix things until someone can give you a definitive error.

Myles Cohen, with a 'happily burbling computer'...

...Dan's message straightened out the problem for me. I had STE-FIX first in the AUTO folder, followed by POOLFIX-4. As soon as I reversed them, the computer bubbled happily and stopped sending me the doesn't-follow-XBRA-rules message.

Some computer definitions from Dave Small that I found interesting. From Cat. 4, Topic 16, Message 146 on the ST RoundTable on Genie...

"RSN" is Jerry Pournelle's "Real Soon Now" phrase, typically meaning six months to forever.

"Two Weeks" is Atari's phrase to describe when their product will pass FCC Class B. It typically means the same as "RSN".

"Yesterday" is a generic phrase typically used to mean "when I get the d*mned software to compile...I mean, it SHOULD work first time!".

"Now Shipping" means that roses are Now Shipping for Mother's Day to the person's relatives. It also typically means that if everything turns out perfectly, the product will ship RSN, in Two Weeks.

"I don't know why it isn't at the dealers...probably stuck at the distributors" means the product is Now Shipping.

"Feature" means a bug.

"Didn't Bother To Mention That Feature" means the bug was REALLY embarrassing!

"The Manuals Are At The Printers" means that the company has purchased a computer to write the manual on, and is now trying different word processors out, particularly shareware ones.

"The Disks Didn't Duplicate Right" means that the disks don't exist, and thus, couldn't duplicate right. It's all in your time perspective. (In other words, "You're not thinking fourth dimensionally, Marty" -- "Doc" Emmett Brown, "Back To The Future".)

I *do* hope that this Translation and Definition Guide will prove useful to you.

A new edition will be posted RSN.

Grin, Dave / Gadgets

Until next week.....

> MAC REPORT

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Issue #008

by Robert Allbritton

*** System 7 Arrives

The Windows 3.0 killer version of the Macintosh OS has arrived, and it looks to be everything that it claimed to be: the good the bad and the ugly. A full review next week.

*** Apple Stock Plunge

Within three weeks, Apple stock has gone down over 25 points from a high of 75 to about 50 this week. Lower earnings than expected are to blame, but Apple seems to be having big problems transforming to a high volume computer maker. While sales of the Macintosh Classic remain strong, sales of the Mac II line are up only slightly, and the new Mac LC, while successful, is not nearly sharing the same sales figures as the Classic. On top of that, a class action suit has been filed by Apple shareholders who bought stock between January 17 and April 30. The suit charges that Apple Executives, including Chairman John Scully, made misleading statements about the company's outlook for earnings growth.

Earlier in the week, Apple stated that their third quarter income may actually be below last years. This sent a shock wave through Wall Street as Apple's rating has gone from buy, to hold, to sell in a little under three weeks.

Everyone seems to believe that Apple as a company remains strong. They are sitting on over \$500 million in cash and have no long term debt. However for an investor, the stock is rapidly losing its attractiveness. Apple claims the transformation from a low volume, high profit margin company to a high volume, low profit margin company may take up to 18 months.

*** Radius lowers prices

In an attempt to match Apple's pricing on the Classic, IIsi and Mac LC, Radius has lowered prices on several products. The Pivot monitor was lowered \$200 to \$1,095. The GS/C greyscale interface was lowered \$400 to \$995. The DirectColor/GX for 13" color video was reduced \$300 to \$795, and Radius TV went down \$600 to \$2,195.

*** Apple orders second Cray.

Cray computer announced they received a \$4.6 million dollar order for a Cray Y-MP2E supercomputer from Apple. The computer will be installed at Apple's main campus in Cupertino California this fall. The computer is Apple's second Cray (they also have an older Cray X-MP that was installed in 1986) The new Cray will be used in research and development and will be linked via high speed networks (over 100 Megabytes per second) to scientific workstations.

*** University of Maine integrates with Macs.

After considering several vendors, the University of Maine chose Apple Computer and their Macintosh systems to fully integrate the campus. Macs will find their way into every form of student and faculty life with computers in dorms, classrooms, and eventually even Professors homes. The Macs were chosen because of price, software, hardware compatibility with existing systems and project training and support.

*** RasterOps introduces new video equipment

The ultimate Macintosh video board will be available from RasterOps starting in June. The new 24XLTV supports 21 inch screens at 1,152 by 870 pixels with 24 bits of color (over 16.7 million colors at once) with real-time live video display in a window at 30 frames a second and video frame capture from NTSC (American et al) PAL (European) and SECAM (French) video sources. Also built into the board is live video out, and overlay that will allow the mixing of graphics and video. The 24XLTV also supports QuickDraw display acceleration and JPEG hardware picture compression all on the board. How much for all of this? \$4,995 - Screen extra. But remember that this board has 4 megs of RAM, and is the equivalent of a small video studio.

RasterOps also introduced a new 21" color monitor (Hitachi tube) for \$4,499 and a separate image compression NuBus board for \$399, along with a new display system for the Sun SPARC line of computers.

*** Apple joins Novell Group

Novell announced that Apple will participate in Novell's new Technical Support Alliance. This new group will attempt to provide cross - training, cooperative support, and product and information exchanges. Other members include Borland, Compaq, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, NetFRAME, Novell, Oracle, Ungermann-Bass and 3Com.

*** New configurations for Mac LC

In an attempt to speed up business sales for the Macintosh LC, Apple announced two new configurations for the computer. Customers can now substitute the 512K Video Ram for the Keyboard in the LC for the same \$2,499 suggested retail price (2 Megs of RAM, 40 Mb Hard Drive). This allows customers to select the keyboard they want while giving them the expanded colors that the 512K Video Ram offers (16,000 colors at once on the 12" screen and 256 colors at once on the 13" screen.) The other configuration offers the 512K video Ram, no keyboard, 8 Megs of Ram and 80 Megs of hard drive storage for \$2,999

Well, that's all for now - back to exams (3 more days, then its my "last" summer before I have to deal with the Real World [and a job]) See you next week.

ST WRITER ELITE VERSION 4.0
(Changes since 3.6)

- For users of the MEGA TOS (1.2) and the buggy disk-loaded version of TOS 1.4 (1988), previous versions required you to move the mouse pointer outside of the menu area at the top of the edit screen when pressing the [ESC] key to return to the menu screen. This was done to correct for a GEM bug which drops menus on the mouse, leaving holes in the menu like swiss cheese. No problem with the original version of soft-load TOS, 1.0, and 1.4 (1989). Now, the mouse automatically drops out of the area (does NOT work in combination with Atari's MAC-CEL2.PRG).
- Improvements to the form input (from disk file) have been made, and bugs that caused screwy things on wrapping an insert word occurring at the end of a line have been squashed.
- Support for Moniterm monitor. 160 columns by 57 lines, or 160 by 93 lines in hi-res flip-flop.
- ver. 3.6 had a bug in the floppy format routine which appeared on TOS versions previous to TOS 1.2 (Mega TOS), and caused a fatal crash. Fixed in 3.7.
- The mouse cursor state is neutralized at exit further enhancing running of the program from a shell.
- ALL PREVIOUS VERSIONS TO 3.8 WILL NOT RUN PROPERLY ON THE STE COMPUTERS. THE TEXT AND BACKGROUND APPEAR THE SAME COLOR WHEN YOU PRESS ^T TO TRANSFORM COLORS.
- Increased compatibility with AtariWriter+. Foreign characters now translate into their ST equivalents correctly. You will still need to edit out the AtariWriter+ global formatting data and tab settings.
- 4.0 is compatible with ALL resolutions on the TT.
- 4.0 will now fast-load, and on TT will load into fast TT RAM.
- 4.0 allows selection of 3 font sizes in TT Med and TT High resolutions, and 2 sizes in ST High and TT Low.
- 4.0 combines menu screens into one screen. GEM is always active, and alert boxes now work alone as opposed to in parallel with command box alerts.
- 4.0 actually has two flavors: this one works fine in TT TOS 3.5 and better, but TOS 3.1 has VT52 emulator color problems in Low Res TT mode. The version for START magazine has a fix for this, and will be available if and when START publishes again. You can also fix it by using Quick ST 3.0 which bypasses the TOS routines.
- You can now set the default for tabs to 4, 5, or 8 for tab expansion when loading non-ST Writer Elite programs. SETTING the default tabs [Shift Tab] remains unchanged.
- The STWRITER.PRG file may now be modified to hold your default settings for screen color on boot-up (black or white background is ineffective on the Moniterm Monitor, it always has white background

with black text), tab setting, default file extender, and format line settings. Your disk and STWRITER.PRG file must NOT be write-protected, so do it on a back-up copy just in case of a screw-up.

When you re-boot STWRITER.PRG, the new settings become the default. If you want to return to the virgin settings, this option is available as well.

As always, any bugs, let me know.

Bruce Noonan, M.D., Compuserve [72407,504] or Genie [B.Noonan]

Editor Note;

This program, ST Writer Elite, is one of our standby favorites. Many to the good Doctor for keeping this jewel up to date. STReport was elated to see this file available for download on CIS early Friday. For a "Not for Sale", PD word processor, this beauty rivals many, many commercial programs. Make sure you obtain this program. Its a good one.

> GEM-View STR Review "GEM-View is *THE* picture viewer."
=====

GEM-View -- SUPER HOT!
=====

by Ed Krimen

A new picture viewer came across comp.binaries.atari.st on Usenet recently. Just what we all need is another picture viewer, right? Well, GEM-View is *THE* picture viewer. Not only does it handle the mundane GIF, Degas (uncompressed and compressed), and Tiny-Compressed images, it also handles (and this from the included READ.ME file):

o DF Rasterfiles (a own format)	[*.PDF]
o GIF Images	[*.GIF]
o Sun Rasterfiles	[*.SUN]
o STAD Images	[*.PAC]
o IFF Imagefiles (SOME, NOT ALL, searching for desc.)	[*.IFF]
o GEM-(X)Image Files	(*.IMG)
o GEM-Metafiles (Vector)	(*.GEM)
o Neochrome Rasterfiles	(*.NEO)
o Art-Director Rasterfiles	(*.ART)
o Degas Images	(*.P[IC][123])
o Tiny-Compressed Images	(*.TN[123Y])
o Doodle Monochrome Rasters	(*.DOO [640x...])
o Spectrum 512 Images	(*.SPU, *.SPC)
o X Bitmap-File (a bitmap C-Source description)	[*.XBM]

There are quite a few good picture viewers for the ST, including ViewGIF 1.2, Giffer, PicSwitch, and DSslide. Each of them have unique features, but I have not seen anything so feature-packed as GEM-View.

For starters, all of GEM-View's output is done in a GEM window. Since the program can be run as a program or a desk accessory, it's very versatile. When run as a desk accessory, you can have a picture in a window along with all your other open windows.

When GEM-View is selected under the DESK menu on the desktop or run as a program, the first thing that appears is a small log window in the lower left portion of the screen. This non-scrollable window displays the title of the program, its version number, and author, Dieter Fiebelkorn, all in the smallest system font to fit as much info in as little space. Before you've recognized this however, a file selector has appeared so that you may select a picture to view. Once a file has been selected, it's current configuration, including original picture type, size, number of colors, is shown in the log window.

By this time, GEM-View is converting the picture, if conversion is necessary, to the current screen resolution and color capabilities. If you're running GEM-View in monochrome and you've selected a color picture, it will automatically convert the picture to monochrome, including dithering and resizing if the picture is larger than your current screen size. If required, it goes through a couple of color remapping and screen compression sequences. It also tells you how long it takes to load and process the picture. The neat thing is that it actually tells you this in the log window as it's happening. Oh, and before I forget, not only does it show the info in the log window as it's doing its converting, but it does everything in the background. Yes, this program multitasks!! So, you can select a GIF picture to convert, and while it's doing that in the background, you can do other stuff, like write a review of a new program or your new unauthorized biography of Jack Tramiel. The down-side to this is that the system is slowed down considerably when it's doing the conversions. I suppose this would be a good reason to get a TT or a 68030 upgrade. <grin>

So, once the picture is finished converting, it outputs the image to a full-screen window. If the image doesn't fit on the screen, you can scroll the image using the usual scroll bars on the GEM window. Or, you can hold down the right mouse button on the image and use the mouse to scroll the picture inside the window. Some spectacular, advanced features are revealed when you hold the right-mouse button over the scroll bars. These features include saving the picture, sizing the window, clipping the picture, rotating the clip, setting the brightness, dither or halftone, and a few other things.

I used GEM-View with MonSTer, which is a program that creates a 1280x960 monochrome, 1280x480 4-color, or 640x480 16-color virtual screen depending upon which ST resolution you've chose to boot in. GEM-View works perfectly with this, and I'll assume it works with the large Moniterm monitors as well the TT resolutions.

When I was looking through the READ.ME file, I was expecting to find the ubiquitous shareware plea, but there wasn't one -- only Dieter's Usenet signature file. This program is easily of commercial caliber. I'd be surprised if it isn't sold by itself or at least bundled with another commercial program in the future.

There are many more features in GEM-View that I haven't mentioned. If you ever view pictures on your ST, you should get a copy of this

program.

> USERGROUPS STR FOCUS
=====

Starting a Usergroup

SO YOU WANT TO START A USER GROUP?
=====

A primer for starting
your own user group

by Tim Holt

ACCEPT of El Paso

The computer sits on your desk, shiny, new and ready to take you on a cruise that you have never been on before. You got your word processor, your spreadsheets, your data bases, and all the other neat things that the guy at the computer store could sell you. Your tax rebate check is gone, and your wife wants some results from that expensive "toy". You crank up the word processor, and start into the 576 page manual: "Make sure interface A is solidly connected to your camshaft before you begin any operation of your wing nut removal system..." It is going to be a long time before grandma gets her letter.

How could you avoid the hassles of computer ownership? How could you find out how part A slides "easily into slot B"? And most importantly, will grandma ever get her letter? Well, you could go back to your dealer, but chances are they would have to fit you in between customers, and frankly, they thought you were smart enough to figure the computer out before you bought it. It would be EMBARRASSING to go back to them. You convinced them that you were smart, and going back would prove they were wrong. The best bet would be to find another computer user, who was in the same mess you are in now. Another user who could guide you through the programs.

Even better, a group of users who could help you, whose brains you could pick, and who wouldn't make you feel too stupid. What you need is a USER GROUP. What do you say? There is no user group in your area? Well, why not start your own? In this series of columns we will hopefully describe how someone can get a user group going in their area. What to look for, what to avoid, and how to keep that club going even after it is well established. Of course, this is just a generic outline of how to get a UG going. The rest will be up to you. Like art, the limits in any user group are the limits of your imagination. You will do things that we

have never tried, and some of the things we have tried won't work for you. But hopefully, this series will let you at least see the way to go. This week's topic:

WHAT, WHY and WHERE of a user group:

1. The first questions are, what is a user group, and do I belong?
A user group is defined here as a group of people with some sort of similar interest: ie. The computer. This group meets together, either formally or informally to discuss how to make the computer a more useful tool for them. If you do not think that you are getting all you can out of your computer, then you might enjoy the services of a user group. If you are a master of everything about computers, then a user group would be a great place to display the fruits of all your hard work. In other words, a user group can be fun for just about everyone.
2. Why form a user group?
Wouldn't just talking to your friends be enough? Well, this idea works if all of your friends own exactly the same things you do. Chances are they don't. Chances are also pretty good that your friends are not using the computer for the same purposes you are. The old cliché that two heads are better than one works well here. Input from a wide variety of sources is extremely important. You didn't buy the first car you ever saw, or the first computer. You shopped around and got a variety of ideas. A user group facilitates the wide variety of inputs, the bantering around of new ideas. Some fellow from the other side of town or in another city, might have a solution to your problem that your inner circle just can't figure out. The sharing of ideas is THE major reason user groups are formed.
3. Okay, I want to form one. How do I do it?
Well, you just can't expect a user group to form overnight. Some careful considerations are in order BEFORE you even have a first meeting.

Consideration #1: Will your area support a user group?

Get a feel for how many other similar computer users there are in your area. If you are the only one in a 300 mile radius, chances are a group won't work. However, if you know of several other people with your type of computer, chances are there are many others that you do not know about. (Kind of like roaches: if you see one, there might be thousands in the walls...) Put a feeler up on a local BBS that supports your computer. Ask the dealer nearby if they would ask customers about starting a group. Put a poster up in the local computer store saying that a user group is forming, and to call you if they are interested. This should give you a pretty good idea. Make an effort to let it be known about an organizational meeting that you will have. Make the date and time convenient for most people. The organizational meeting for our group was held in a food court at a local shopping center. The reason being, the mall was well known, easy to get to, centrally located, and neutral. Folks might have qualms about going to some stranger's house. If you find that a few people are interested, great. Don't be discouraged by a low turnout either. Our first meeting had 5 people show up!

Consideration #2: Where are you going to meet regularly?

Well, you can't keep meeting in the middle of the mall, so you had better find a place that facilitates your club. I will give you several things to look for in a meeting room:

Lots of chairs (for the big crowds!), lots of tables (gotta put those computers somewhere) and lots of electrical outlets. If you know a place that meets those criteria, go for it. (This also knocks out most peoples homes.)

-Public libraries usually have meeting rooms that they will let you use. They SHOULD let you use them if you tell them you are a non-profit organization. Since your taxes help pay for the library, most cities allow clubs to use the meeting rooms in libraries.

-Public schools also make nice meeting places. Lots of chairs, etc, however, most schools are not open on Saturdays, which is a traditional meeting day. Check with your local school district on their policy towards clubs using the facilities.

-Churches usually have meeting rooms and tables with chairs.

If you have a close relationship with a local church, go ahead and ask them if you can use the room once a month. They might ask for a small donation, and if it isn't too outrageous, go for it.

-Local computer dealer: The guy that sold you the computer might have an open area in the back of the shop that you can use. This is especially nice for you because you get to use their computers, and see the newest gadgets right in the store. It is also nice for the dealer, because he gets a group of users that are always looking for the newest and neatest stuff, and he essentially has a captive audience for a few hours. Good for you, good for him.

-Other options: I have heard of clubs meeting in banks, Shriner's Halls, Bingo Parlors, the local college, you name it, they meet there.

Remember though, if you can save money, do so. If you have a choice between a free place and a \$5 a month place, go for the free one if they are similar. Some places make you sign an agreement for a period of time, say, a year. Don't sign one that says YOU will have to pay so and so. YOU will get stuck with the bill if something happens. Try to find a place that has no monetary restriction, such as security deposits. That's why our club meets in a library. We have an agreement that says our club will meet there the second Saturday of each month for an entire year. No other user can use the facility during our time, from 12:30pm until 3:30pm.

Consideration #3: How will the group be structured?

Traditionally, a club of ANY kind has the basic officers:

President: The grand marshall. He oversees all the goings-on of the club. This person sets the agenda of the club, and is responsible for making sure that things run smoothly. (In many clubs, the president is EVERYTHING! Don't let this happen. For one, he will get burned out real fast, OR he will go on a power trip that will alienate the rest of the membership. When things

go well, the president looks good. When things go poorly, the president looks real bad! If you have a traditional club, make sure the president shares responsibilities with,

Vice President: This guy fills in for the president when the president is away, sick, or resigns, as in the case of our club! Sometimes, the president just flips out, and the vice president must be there to fill in. (I would tell you about our flipped out president, but there are still a few in El Paso that are sensitive about it...)

Secretary: This person is in charge of the club's office work. Mailing out letters, filing newsletters, keeping the membership informed about the goings on in the club. Also, the secretary often will take the minutes of the meeting to be read at the next meeting. The duties of the secretary are often closely related to the

Treasurer: He is in charge of the club's money. Your club will have to get a bank account and this person is in charge of it. Make sure it is someone trustworthy. Also, make sure there are specific guidelines for how money should be spent. Can the treasurer take money out of the account by himself, or must two officers sign for money? Can the officers spend money BETWEEN meetings, or must all transactions be approved by the membership? All of these questions must be answered BEFORE anyone should be allowed to play with the money. Sure as shoot, if you spend money, someone will ask why, and since the membership money was paid by the members, they will demand an accounting. They have the right to one at any time. It's really their money. Sometimes, the officers of a club will get cocky, and think that the money belongs to them. That is why safety guidelines should be established, to protect everyone. In many smaller clubs, the secretary and the treasurer are usually the same person.

This traditional method is rather like a triangle, with the president at the top, and the regular members at the bottom.

There are other ways to structure the club as well. ACCEPT has no officers per se, but rather a three member executive committee that meets on occasion. There are no RULES that say your club must have things a certain way. Our group started out with the traditional officers, but evolved into what we have now. No one way is correct. You may decide that officers are needed, or you may decide that officers are a pain. If it feels good, do it. Can't decide? Well, that's one of the neat things about user groups, someone will always come up with an idea. (Sometimes the ideas are pretty lousy, but every once in a while, a gem of hope comes through.)

So you have decided to form a group, you got a meeting place and have decided on the organizational aspects. Next time, we will discuss how to get members, and what you have to offer them in order to keep them.

> CHANGING TIMES! STR Spotlight
=====

What is going on??

EVOLUTION IN THE ATARI WORLD
OR
THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY REMAIN THE SAME!

An observation...

by Ralph F. Mariano

Lately, we clearly find the DTP publishing arena seeming to dominate the entire marketing perspective for Atari's computer sales efforts. Is this really the picture Atari Corp. cares to portray? Could it possibly be we are in on the very beginnings of a substantial change in Atari's marketing and penetration priorities? Is the current crop of Atari computers destined to be primarily aimed at the DTP market? Has there been some type of clandestine arrangement made to favor certain software packages which are aimed at niche markets only? Is Atari slowly leaning toward the high priced, specialty application and productivity market? Read.. A "verticle niche" market. Are the days of the "home computer" for everyone over? Could be. Let's try to begin an examination of the 'big' picture.

Since the plethora of online conferences at the beginning of the year, how many of the projected goals of those conferences are actually in existence? How many are driving the Atari userbase and market in the USA to new and dizzying heights? How many here-to-fore unheard of publishers of magazines, reviews, software and newsletters have picked up the Atari story of success and begun to cover the fine example of how to do business in the USA and succeed? Well, so far one author/reviewer tried and because he spoke the truth... the clique and its lemmings found it absolutely necessary to attack this man. How very original and indeed what a wonderful manner in which to win unrivaled support for Atari. Well done folks.

As an example, Jerry Pournelle was sent a TT030 to try, examine and review. Of course, everyone held their breath hoping for a magnanimously positive exclamation from Jerry. Or did they? From what is known now, some were very busy trying to place their software in the running to be reviewed along with the TT, nothing wrong with that. Except Jerry receives large quantities of both hardware and software every week. It would have been nice if he and the TT were 'prepped'. That is to say, have the software already installed on the TT's hard disk and ready to use. To expect Jerry to set-up the TT, install software and THEN do a review is a bit much. Then to top off the scene he is bombarded with a level of arrogance which drove to decide to drop the whole idea.

Well, Jerry said he "liked" the TT but that he was less than pleased with the software that was available specifically for it. Immediately, the "war hounds" were foaming at the muzzles ready to kill. Unfortunately, these "representatives of the Atari userbase" failed to realize one fact. Pournelle was to do a hardware review! He was not to carry on over

any single software offering or indeed indirectly promote a particular company or individual's software offerings. It was, after all, a TT030 HARDWARE review.

Amazingly, when this occurred, a number of questions arose:

Was every software publisher who still supports the Atari platform "notified to send software to Pournelle in hopes of getting a favorable review along with review of the TT?

Was it really necessary for all the hate mail? Did the so-called leadership in the Atari arena take all things into consideration and then act in the best interests of Atari and its supporting developers?

How in heaven's name can Atari ever hope to project the image of a mature anxious to learn and progressive userbase when continually, an immature "gang up on and get even" type attitude seems to permeate each and every reaction to negative or disagreeable commentaries?

To continue, tragically we find a MAJOR software publisher, Word Perfect Corp. has dropped future development for the Atari lines. Up to this point we all were hopeful that the porting of later versions of Word Perfect for Atari Germany would lead to the USA getting a full update. The PRESTEGE lost by this unfortunate occurrence is serious. This wouldn't be so bad if it were JUST Word Perfect but when one considers how many others are doing or have done the very same thing it fast becomes a tragedy. It IS a tragedy! Now, there are rumblings of a re-worked Word-Up in the works. Could this be a coincidence?

The ST/TT/STE Computer line is very well designed, easy to use and of course among the most user friendly ever made. Then why, WHY aren't they readily accepted in the computing world? This is not an easy answer but there ARE answers to this problem and surprisingly, there are good solutions available too! Can someone say advertise and provide an ample supply of product to the USA market?

National wholesale distribution is a large part of the big picture, thankfully, its now in place. Advertising is the rest of the picture, so let's see some real publicity for these fine machines. Perhaps the new arrangements of joint advertising ventures will bear fruit. Make people aware of the superb Atari Computers and the machines will sell themselves. Out here in the trenches, anyone who mentions the machine or demonstrates it experiences this all the time. Folks are amazed at what a great computer it really is. Most all say the same thing, "HOW COME WE NEVER HEARD OF IT?" That is the easiest question to answer, because Atari doesn't really advertise. Its time they did and did it heavily with a vengeance.

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